



NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE



Recreational Fisheries and Aquaculture

NOAA

Recreational Fisheries and Aquaculture

Aquaculture is an increasing activity in our ocean environment, and many in the saltwater recreational fishing community have concerns over how aquaculture projects could affect their fishing activities. Aquaculture provides an important food source, and responsible well designed aquaculture projects can provide benefits to the general population and the recreational fishing community. This document is designed to provide information that will help the recreational fishing community ask critical questions about aquaculture, and to facilitate where to find pertinent information when aquaculture issues arise that may impact recreational fishing activities.

Currently, the U.S. imports 86% of the seafood consumed and half of that is cultured. This requires a balancing of multiple public demands and interests with attention to the long-term biological integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service is responsible for the management, conservation, and protection of the nation's living marine resources for the benefit of all Americans. As aquaculture grows, it will be up to the managers of the resource to work with stakeholders to maximize benefits while minimizing conflict. To accomplish this, open communication is necessary. The recreational fishing community is an important stakeholder in this process.

When an aquaculture project is proposed there is a suite of critical issues to be considered. Positive aspects of increasing domestic aquaculture include:



- Aquaculture regulated under strict domestic environmental regulations
- Reduced pressure on wild stocks
- Greater availability of fish in the market
- Employment
- Preserving a viable working waterfront, thus access for fishing
- Less imports
- Increased food security from domestic production
- Healthier fish products for the consumer

Other issues that need to be addressed include:

- Loss of fishing areas
- Non-indigenous introductions
- Feeding forage fish to fish
- Disease
- Parasites
- Pollution
- Escapes and genetic concerns



The best course of action is to educate yourself on the issues from credible sources and stay involved and connected to the process to ensure your voice is heard.

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service Role

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to the stewardship of living marine resources through science-based conservation and management, and the promotion of healthy ecosystems. Education and research efforts on all of the issues highlighted above have been undertaken and information on these issues is available through NOAA's aquaculture programs.

Useful links for information on marine aquaculture issues:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aquaculture/> NOAA's Aquaculture Office homepage

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/ob/aquaculture/> NMFS Greater Atlantic Region aquaculture homepage

http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aquaculture/science/science_homepage.html Aquaculture Science Homepage

http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aquaculture/supplemental_pages/feeds_homepage.html Alternative feeds for aquaculture report

http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/aquaculture/supplemental_pages/naahp.html National Aquatic Animal Health Plan

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/Sustainable/recfishing/> NMFS Greater Atlantic Region recreational fishing homepage

Where to Get More Information

For more information on aquaculture contact: David Alves, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Aquaculture Coordinator - Phone (978) 281-9210, e-mail: david.alves@noaa.gov.

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